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How to write a bad restaurant review for school

The top copy editor at Random House has a book out about what you should and shouldn't do in your writing, and people are already arguing about it. All writing advice is relative, because language is not physics, it's something people made up. That doesn't mean writing advice is useless, so if you like to write and are trying to get better at it, you should read this excerpt from Benjamin Dreyer's book *Dreyer's English: An Utterly Correct Guide to Clarity and Style*. In this particular piece, Dreyer mostly focuses on "bad habits" that writers fall into, on the level of sentences and word choice. Some of Dreyer's advice only applies to narrative writing, but a lot applies to all kinds of writing, down to particularly important emails. For example: Be wary of inadvertent rhymes, of the "Rob commuted to his job" or "make sure that tonight is all right" sort. By "be wary," I mean: Don't do them. And: You writers are all far too keen on "And then," which can usually be trimmed to "Then" or done away with entirely. *G/O Media* may get a commission as with *Strunk & White*, you can pick and choose from Dreyer's advice. You won't agree with every rule, but you'll probably find something useful that makes your writing a little more clear or compelling. If you do write fiction, there are a lot of solid nitty-gritty pieces of advice. My personal favorite is a solution for the awkward sentences required by a flashback: For fiction written in the past tense, here's a technique for tackling flashbacks that I stumbled upon years ago, and writers I've shared it with have tended to get highly excited: Start off your flashback with, let's say, two or three standard-issue had's ("Earlier that year, Jerome had visited his brother in Boston"), then clip one or two more had's to a discreet "it" ("After an especially unpleasant dinner, he'd decided to return home right away"), then drop the past-perfecting altogether when no one's apt to be paying attention and slip into the simple past ("He unlocked his front door, as he later recalled it, shortly after midnight"). Works like a charm. As a writer I've never needed a trick like that, but as a reader, I got a thrill. That's what's so fun about writing advice—you don't have to be a writer to appreciate it. Are These Bad Habits Creeping Into Your Writing? | Lit Hub Photo Courtesy: SbytovaMN/iStock by Getty Images Many people oversleep now and then — and there's nothing wrong with sleeping in occasionally. But chronic oversleeping (also called hypersomnia) is linked to several health conditions. So if you regularly sleep 10 to 12 hours or more per night, you may want to ask your doctor if this could be a sign of a health problem. Learn about the causes of chronic oversleeping, related health problems and ways to build a healthier sleep pattern. Photo Courtesy: FG Trade/iStock by Getty Images Hypersomnia means that you're regularly sleeping 10 to 12 hours a night or more, but you're still feeling tired during the day. You may have hypersomnia if you: Sleep too long at night (more than 10 hours) Feel very groggy when you wake up and very sleepy during the day Need to take naps during the day — but still feel tired afterwards Take naps at inappropriate times, like during work or meals What Causes Oversleeping? Photo Courtesy: Pheelings Media/iStock by Getty Images One common cause of oversleeping is sleep apnea — a condition where your breathing stops and starts again repeatedly throughout the night. This breathing problem disturbs your sleep patterns and leads to oversleeping and daytime sleepiness. Depression is another common cause of oversleeping. Alcohol and drug use can also cause oversleeping — and drowsiness is a common side effect of many medicines. Sometimes, there's no medical cause for oversleeping. Some people may just need more sleep than others or enjoy sleeping longer at night. Is Oversleeping Bad for You? Photo Courtesy: Wavebreakmedia/iStock by Getty Images The relationship between oversleeping and health problems isn't always clear. Oversleeping can be a symptom of an underlying health problem, but more research is needed to find out whether oversleeping causes or raises your risk for certain health problems. For example, people who regularly oversleep seem to have a higher risk for diabetes, heart disease and obesity. But it's not clear whether or how oversleeping may cause these problems. Lack of sleep and disturbed sleep are also linked to health problems. So if you're regularly oversleeping or you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, talk with your doctor. How to Stop Oversleeping Photo Courtesy: LaylaBird/iStock by Getty Images Experts recommend that adults sleep about seven to nine hours per night. Anything over that is considered oversleeping. It's fine to get a bit more sleep from time to time — but if you're oversleeping regularly, you can take steps to build a healthier sleep routine. Keep a regular sleep schedule. A regular sleep routine can help your body sleep and wake when it's supposed to. Sleeping in on weekends can be relaxing, but sticking to the same bedtime and wake time may be better if you have sleep problems. Set an alarm — and resist the urge to snooze. It may seem obvious, but regularly getting up with the same alarm can help get your sleep on track. If hitting the snooze button is very tempting, try placing your alarm clock across the room. Avoid napping during the day. Napping during the day can make it harder to fall asleep at night and lead to oversleeping. See your doctor — or go to a sleep specialist. Some sleep problems need treatment from a doctor. Your doctor may also refer you to a specialist to help find out what's causing your sleep problem and how to fix it. Resource Links: MORE FROM SYMPTOMFIND.COM DISCLAIMER: This content is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended as legal, accounting, tax, HR, or other professional advice. You are responsible for your own compliance with laws and regulations. You should contact your attorney or other relevant advisor for advice specific to your circumstances. Criticism is uncomfortable. Criticism is especially uncomfortable when it's in the form of a review...from a guest...about the food and/or service at your restaurant that you've worked so hard to perfect. You know this truth by now - bad restaurant reviews are real. And they can hurt. You've worked tirelessly to make your restaurant what it is today. Maybe you've even put years of work into the menu - or a lifetime. Imagine it's the middle of a Tuesday and you've been making pasta all day. You check your reviews and a guest criticizes your Italian restaurant on a TripAdvisor (after you've just made pasta all day). When in the form of a review, despite its pains, negative feedback is one of your key tools to improving areas of your restaurant such as operations, food, and service. To understand how reviews provide key insights into the customer experience, let's take a look at eight negative reviews and the lessons restaurants can learn from them. Join the fun. We promise not to spam you, swear. We'll handle your info according to our privacy statement. RESOURCE Learn how to navigate changing guest expectations during and after the COVID-19 health crisis. Download Long waits + Greasy chicken = Bad restaurant review Although there are positive reviews on the restaurant's Yelp page about the service and food, the reviewer writes about long the wait times and his dissatisfaction with his meal. The restaurant should take the advice of the reviewer, especially if there is a trend within the reviews talking about salty meat. The reviewer writes, "My lunch libre was barely palatable because the meat was so salty that I could barely eat it inside the taco and not at all on its own." Who knows? Maybe there's a trigger happy chef in the back with an extra large salt shaker that needs to be restrained to avoid further bad reviews. Conversely, if positive reviews consistently highlight one ingredient as particularly great, try incorporating that taste into more dishes. Lesson 2: Offer More Food Options Based on Dietary Restrictions This reviewer didn't even know what they were eating! Jamie J enjoyed the live band, but the food ruined the overall experience. "We had a buffet dinner, which was not good and don't bother if you're a vegetarian," Jamie writes. If Jamie is upset that vegetarian options are limited (or if it's difficult to decipher exactly what food is on your plate), then other guests are probably feeling the same way. If you want to appeal to more people, consider offering more food options based on dietary restrictions. This strategy is appropriate for a large venue hall like the one Jamie reviewed, but if you are aiming to be great at one thing, stick to it. If you want to be your city's best steak house, don't worry too much about your vegetarian options. And - needless to say - be sure guests know what kind of food you are serving if there's a buffet. Despite not understanding how to use the the past tense of the word "use," Jeri writes, "the dim sum was not fresh and the chicken was cold." It sounds like the issues can be fixed right away. She is telling the restaurant exactly what to change. Make the dim sum with fresh ingredients. Serve the chicken promptly so that it's hot. In addition, Jeri writes that this restaurant was once much better. Another reviewer who agrees with Jeri: Sol san and Jeri both said in the past the restaurant provided a better overall experience. Recognizing that this issue is being experienced by more than one formerly satisfied guests, this is a wake up for this call to change now or else receive more bad restaurant reviews. Plus, 35% of guests discover restaurants via online reviews, so keeping an eye on them is critical to awareness. How can the owners improve the restaurant? Perhaps the food can be sourced locally to remain fresh. Since the restaurant seemed to have better days, maybe hiring a restaurant consultant would be their best bet. Lesson 4: Keep Things Affordable High-end restaurants are known for charging more for higher quality offerings and an unbeatable dining experience. Nothing wrong with that! However, remember that menu prices marked up too much could result in a negative experience for your guests if they're not pulling in a seven figure sum. This restaurant, for example, could add a bottle of wine for under \$100. "If they do not want to let the public enjoy a decent bottle at say, \$80, well done," the reviewer writes. Response Strategy: If there is a reason the restaurant owner keeps the wine prices at \$100 a bottle or more, it is best to reply to the guest and let him know you will contact him directly (as you should do for any negative review). Maybe your trusted sommelier suggests only the best wine to compliment the food, and so to offer a bottle of wine under \$100 could tarnish your menu or your reputation. Respond to all reviews, and contact the reviewer directly to take the conversation offline when there is an issue. Here is one review of a restaurant by a patron who had a slew of complaints: "Overall a very mediocre place." If I received a review like this, I might crawl into a hole. But Thomas, the business manager of the restaurant, took it well and responded respectfully. The highlights of his response: Thomas thanks the reviewer and apologizes for the less-than-satisfactory experience. He also tells the guest that he'll contact her directly about the issue. He also mentions that the guest should come back and try other food items. This response shows that restaurant cares and appreciates its guests, which is important for both the unsatisfied guest and potential guests (AKA consumers who are online researching restaurants). Lesson 6: Investigate the Issue Despite starting with "This place is a joke," this review is actually an invaluable resource for the restaurant. There are so many details about the negative experience had by this guest - details that one can analyze and use to improve the guest experience. This reviewer claims that the waitress had too much to drink and that she "dipped" her thumb into the guests' food. If I were this owner, I would follow up with the guest, find out who served Marie that day, and take action. If you uncover a pattern of issues, you may have to answer some important questions. For example, has the staff been trained properly? Your staff is responsible for creating a positive experience for your guests with proper training. As mentioned in the first lesson, look at the patterns within the reviews. "The food is as good as frozen food from Jewel," Marie writes. Not too friendly. Lesson 7: Improve Guest Service To reiterate: train your servers well. A powerful way to make your restaurant shine is to focus on customer service. "Rude hostesses, pushy servers who leave you waiting. Bad, bad, bad I won't be back," Fabi D. writes. The service at this restaurant falls below this guest's expectations in more than one way. Don't let this be your restaurant. Lesson 8: Don't Let the Stress Show There was an issue with the bill and the manager was rude, according to this guest. No matter how busy the restaurant, managers and waiters should always treat guests with respect. This review could have been three or four stars if the issue of the bill were handled in a positive way. Courtesy from all representatives of your restaurant at all stages of the dining experience. Keep it friendly, no matter how busy it gets! One Final Lesson... The guest experience begins before the customer walks through the doors of your restaurant. The reviews posted on your restaurant's review sites (both positive and negative) are an important research tool for customers. Guests will read reviews and make their decisions based on both positive and negative reviews. That's one reason why it's important to have many reviews on your review sites: so that customers can read a variety of opinions about your restaurant. The lessons you can learn from reviews are important for the success of your restaurant. The customer experience, which can be understood and improved by with insights from customer feedback, should continue to be redesigned based on continuous guest feedback. Related Restaurant Marketing Resources How to Brand a Restaurant Restaurant Promotion Ideas Restaurant Name Ideas Service can make or break a restaurant experience. In this guide, you'll learn how to train your servers to be their best.

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